



Project Impact STEM Academy

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December 18, 2020

Dear Project Impact STEM Academy Families:

At Thursday night's board meeting it was decided that we will resume our staggered-start hybrid-model starting on January 4th. This decision was not made without a thorough discussion regarding the pros and cons of staying online vs returning to hybrid. The overall feeling was that we have learned a lot since Thanksgiving. It is going to be imperative that the community comes together to ensure that we can stay in school without interruption, and the board felt that this is something that our school community could support. Central District Health is really pleased with how well the PiSTEM community has done so far and how effective our protocols have performed. To date the COVID positive cases that have entered our school have resulted in zero spread. We have had no cases that have been contracted at PiSTEM. Over the last few weeks, the Army Reserves have increased access to rapid testing in our community, they are working out of the St. Als on Cherry Lane in Meridian and 12th Street in Nampa, from 8am to 8pm to make rapid testing available to the entire community on a drive-up basis, no more scheduling appointments, and you get results while you wait. The availability of real-time results is a game changer, because it means that less people get unknowingly exposed. In addition, there has been strong social messaging through the radio to encourage mask wearing and CDH has created a lot of awareness by considering mandatory masking and other restrictions district wide. The result of these efforts is that the community spread is currently on a downward trend.

In order to continue the current trend it is going to be important that everyone considers how their choices impact the greater community and adjust accordingly. The good news is that there is a quarantine period of 10 days following Christmas day before we return to school. With this said, there are a lot of protocols that you can put in place that decrease the chance of exposure to COVID and we still encourage you to consider which of these can become part of your celebrations. Additionally, if you are traveling or engaging in large gatherings, we ask that you follow the related recommendations below.

Your support and efforts will help us keep students in the physical classroom. Each of the things you do below is additive, and decreases your risk. The best part is that many of these things are somewhat "invisible":

- 1.) At holiday dinners, assign seating to keep family groupings together and minimize transmission opportunities while eating. Encourage face masks when not eating.
- 2.) Change your furnace filters with hepa or hyperhepa grade filters and change them more frequently than usual.
- 3.) Consider purchasing and using a high-grade air purifier in your house (Place the air purifier under your air return duct for the best results).

- 4.) Make it a routine to have everyone wash their hands immediately upon entering the house.
- 5.) Avoid non-essential travel.
- 6.) If you are traveling make sure you carry a bottle of hand sanitizer and/or a pack of sanitizer wipes (at least 60% alcohol). Wipe down arm rests, etc. and social distance when seating. If you have to eat in an airport, separate from the crowds. Wear a quality mask with a filter insert.
- 7.) If you are going to have out of state or out of area visitors, encourage them to get a COVID test from an asymptomatic COVID test center prior to arrival OR encourage them to quarantine(14 days) prior to arrival.
- 8.) Keep a bottle of hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) in all of your vehicles and make it a habit to hand sanitizer when you get into your car after shopping, etc.
- 9.) Stock up on appropriately sized face masks and commit to washing them after each day's use.
- 10.) When waiting in lines, be the example, provide 6 feet breadth between you and the person in front of you.
- 11.) Adhere to CDH recommendations and always wear a mask when in public.
- 12.) Adhere to CDH recommendations and avoid groups/congregations of more than 10 people.
- 13.) Stay current on CDH advisories.
- 14.) Consider doing a small family celebration for new years, since we start back at school 3 days later - or opt into self-quarantine to complete a 10-day quarantine period if you choose to engage with a large group of people.
- 15.) If you are travelling out of the area, or interacting with large groups of people we strongly advise you to get COVID testing 5-7 days after you arrive home or after the interaction. Remember that if you are requesting testing without symptoms the results will take 2-5 days. If you choose not to test, we ask that you quarantine for 10 days after the last exposure.

Note: If, for example, you have friends or family staying with you for approximately 10 days, it is not necessary to quarantine following this period, as long as no one has had COVID symptoms.

16.) If you are experiencing any of the COVID symptoms, including congestion, fatigue, sore throat, diarrhea, stomach pain, coughing, fever, headache, lack of taste or smell, [etc.](#) seek COVID testing at one of the rapid test sites promptly. Currently, St. Als on Cherry Lane in Meridian or 12th Street in Nampa have rapid testing with results while you wait from 8am to 8pm, M-Sun.

We strongly support in-person instruction for all students, but in the case you find it necessary for your family to self-isolate after the break, the PiSTEM board has provided the option for families to choose to self-isolate and live

stream classes until January 15th. It is important to note that live streaming is not the same as virtual instruction, rather it is an opportunity to listen in on the course instruction during a temporary quarantine period. If your family finds that it is necessary to self-quarantine following the upcoming holiday break please complete the [quarantine form](#). If a student doesn't have a quarantine form on file with Pi STEM and they are not attending in-person instruction they will be considered absent. When the office receives your quarantine form, they will send you a Docusign PiSTEM Volunteer/COVID Temporary Quarantine Guidelines that needs to be signed, acknowledging some procedures we have in place to prevent student privacy violations from occurring.

The PiSTEM Board and Staff wish you a Happy, Healthy Holiday Season.

With gratitude,

Dr. Jill K. Hettinger
Executive Director
Project Impact STEM Academy